



January 2000 Contemplation Theme

The Future is Now

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January 1 of any year is no different than other day, except that we agree on a special name for it, “New Years Day.” The universe did not begin 2000 years ago, so it is really not a “new” year nor a “new” millennium. Even the names we give to the days of the week have no real significance. However, more people die of heart attacks on Monday mornings between 3 and 7 am than any other day and time. Doctors tell us that squirrels die of heart attacks too, but no more of them die on Monday mornings than on other days. That is because squirrels don’t have Mondays. We are affected because we layer meanings onto the names of the days and the activities related to them. They are very real for us – and can even be fatal!

The New Year and New Millennium is created by the mind, but the mind is incredibly powerful! Your mind creates your reality. You perceive things around you, make decisions and then act upon them, which affects you and the world around you. This is the law of karma – what you do has an effect, what you say has an even stronger effect, and what you think has the strongest effect of all. So – what do you think of the New Millennium? Is this all hype, or is it that once-in-a-lifetime opportunity? What you think determines what you will do with it.

The Shiva Sutras describe the state of an enlightened being: *icchashaktir umakumari*, which means s/he lives in the complete knowing of every moment as a divine moment, full of the newness of spring and saturated with the joy of a newborn baby. For such a master, every moment is a golden one, and there is no need for an annual rite of new beginnings. But, the rest of us need a jump-start.

You are laying the seeds of your future in what you think and in what you decide to do. If you go to yoga classes, you’ll feel better and be healthier. But if you don’t do yoga, how will you feel in another 2 years? Your plan may be to let your body get better by itself, but has it so far? You may have already proved to yourself that your body needs some help.

Yoga offers more than physical benefits. It is not merely about *how* you feel, but about *who* you feel yourself to be. With regular yoga practice, your sense-of-self is found in a deeper inner dimension of reality and is less a function of the circumstances around you. In other words, you develop an inner locus of control – you are less a victim of circumstances. And you may even find some of that “inner bliss” that everyone is talking about!

When you take yoga classes, you will also improve other people’s lives. One man came to his wife’s graduation from our Teacher Training program and announced that he’d recommended that everyone in his office do yoga. We asked, “Why? You’re not doing it yourself.” He said, “Yes, but my life has improved so much since my wife began yoga, I figured it would get even better if everyone at work would do it.” This was a smart man. Now, he’s even smarter – he’s doing yoga himself!

Your future arises from the present; what you are doing right now determines how you will feel later today, tomorrow and the rest of your life. The New Millennium is a golden opportunity – what are you doing with it? Allow it to jump-start you and get into gear. Do more yoga!

Namaste,